

### Khost in for rebel attacks

MOSCOW, March 11 (UNI): The strategic Afghan city of Khost is likely to become the target of future rebel attacks, according to the Soviet government daily, *Izvestia*. *Izvestia* said yesterday that Gen. Shah Nawaz Tanai, who led an unsuccessful coup to topple the Afghan President, Dr Najibullah, has arrived in the vicinity of Khost where his tribesmen live.

For more than a year Afghan rebels have been trying to capture Khost because of its aerodrome but have suffered heavy casualties.

A fresh attempt is likely to be made by the renegade air force general to capture the city so that the rebels could use the city airport to launch air attacks on government-controlled territories, the daily said.

On the forces behind the attempted coup, the daily said there was little evidence to show that Gen. Tanai was backed by Mr Gulbuddin Hekmatiyar, leader of the most powerful Mujahideen group based on Pakistan.

## WORLD



Cubans in Havana demonstrate in front of a house on Thursday where a meeting of human rights activists took place. Cuba has reacted adversely to the U.N. security council singling it out for censure on alleged human rights violation earlier in a U.S.-sponsored resolution. — AP/PTI.

## France backs Poland on German issue

By VAJU NARAVANE / The Times of India News Service PARIS, March 11.

THE French President, Mr Francois Mitterrand, fully supported the position of the Polish government when he said that the declaration adopted by the West German Parliament on Poland's border with Germany was insufficient.

At a joint press conference on Friday with the visiting Polish leaders, Gen Jaruzelski and the Prime Minister, Mr Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Mr Mitterrand supported the Polish demand for a treaty guaranteeing the Oder Neisse line which forms the existing border.

This tough French position is certainly not going to please the German Chancellor, Mr Helmut Kohl, who, under heavy internal and international pressure has already been obliged to take a step backwards. Mr

Mitterrand, who carefully alluded to Franco-German friendship several times during the press conference said he would speak to the Chancellor over the phone tomorrow. Mr Mitterrand said France and West Germany remained friends, allies, associates and partners. "I have confidence in the German people," Mr Mitterrand said.

But despite all this sweetening, the real message was clear. The French President called upon Mr Kohl to inject greater clarity into the debate over the German reunification. France, Mr Mitterrand said, considers the Oder Neisse line as being established beyond doubt and inalienable. Any declaration failing to state this specifically, would be insufficient, Mr Mitterrand said. This intangibility of the border treaty reaffirmed by an international treaty.

This act should be negotiated as soon as possible and in any case before the probable reconification of the two Germans, Mr Mitterrand

emphasised. He reproached Bonn for having failed to specifically mention the Oder Neisse line by name in the declaration adopted by the Bundestag. It would have been better to state it, he said.

On the second objective of their trip, that is the inclusion of Poland in the "four plus two" conference to discuss the German issue, the Polish leaders obtained a less clear commitment from Paris. Poland is not inside the group of six (the four victors of the second World War and the two Germans) but next to it, Mr Mitterrand stated, suggesting that the Polish government ought to be present during the discussions on the border issues.

France has already suggested the holding of clustered negotiations with different countries being present during discussions directly concerning them. The French President will suggest this formula when he meets them in Bonn on Wednesday.

### Lithuania opens 'freedom session'

VILNIUS (Soviet Union), March 11 (AFP): The newly elected Lithuanian Parliament opened a session that is expected to declare the Baltic republic's independence.

The chairman of the Lithuanian electoral commission, Mr Yuozas Bulovas, officially inaugurated the session yesterday as a crowd assembled outside the Parliament building singing patriotic songs.

"The principal task that faces us is the restoration of the sovereignty and independence of Lithuania," Mr Bulovas said. "This issue is essential for Lithuania and for its relations with the Soviet Union."

The session was being attended by 125 of the 131 local deputies elected in last month's vote which saw the Sajudis, Independence Movement win more than a two-thirds' majority.

The full assembly will count 141 deputies when elections from all the local constituencies are completed in April.

Among the bills to be voted on will be the designation of the future state's name and its flag. The session is also to choose a parliamentary chairman, a key post because the new republic will not immediately have a head of state according to the drafts of its planned structures.

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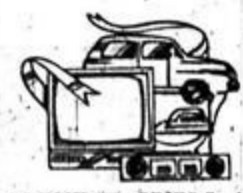
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## Arabs support India on J & K

ABU DHABI, March 11 (UNI).

INDIA is finding considerable support among the Arab countries for its call to Pakistan to help defuse the Kashmir issue by bilateral talks in the spirit of the 1972 Simla agreement between the two countries.

This was indicated in discussions that the visiting Indian leaders have had over the past few days with the heads of states and governments in Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, Algeria and South Yemen. The leaders of these countries have expressed themselves against religion-based separatism and terrorism.

The Lok Sabha speaker, Mr Rabi Ray, told this agency here that he had exchanged views on the subject with the South Yemen President, Mr Haider Abu Baker A. Attas, and the Jordanian leader, King Hussein, as well as with the other leaders in the two countries and that all of them were for a peaceful solution in Kashmir.

Similar impressions were gathered by the deputy chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Dr Najma Heptulla, after a meeting with the Iraqi president, Mr Saddam Hussain, and by the civil aviation minister, Mr Arif Mohammed Khan, after visiting Egypt and Algeria.

Mr Ray led a delegation of seven parliamentarians to South Yemen and Jordan while Dr Heptulla and Mr Khan came as the special envoys of the Prime Minister, Mr V. P. Singh, carrying letters from him for the Iraqi and Egyptian Presidents.

The Indian leaders also reiterated

India's support to the Palestinians and Mr Ray specifically pointed out to King Hussein that India favoured his initiative for mobilising world opinion against the resettlement of the Soviet Jews in the occupied Arab areas by Israel.

On Indo-Pak relations and the Kashmir situation, Mr Ray said that he informed the leaders in Jordan and South Yemen that the Indian constitution not only guaranteed equality to all Indians irrespective of their religions but also protected the rights of the minorities. India had proof that Pakistan was not only inspiring the religion-based agitation in Kashmir but also arming terrorists there and in Punjab, he added.

Mr Ray, who halted here on Thursday before returning home, said views were also exchanged with parliamentarians in the two countries and that all of them favoured a peaceful settlement in Kashmir.

Dr Heptulla, who was in Baghdad on Wednesday and Thursday, told this agency that the President, Mr Hussain, expressed himself clearly against religious and other fanaticism and was hopeful that India and Pakistan would mutually settle the Kashmir problem.

She also delivered a letter to him from Mr Singh which is understood to have informed the Arab leader that besides arming the terrorists in Kashmir, the Pakistan government's official statement reflected a rhetoric of confrontation. India, on the other hand, wanted peace and the new government had already made attempts to demonstrate its goodwill.

Dr Heptulla said that while Pakistan was talking about the United

Nations resolution on Kashmir, Islamabad itself had never honoured it by withdrawing its troops from occupied Kashmir or the other five. Pakistan has sent troops in 1948 in a military action against India in which it seized about one-third of Kashmir.

She said she also discussed the Kashmir situation and the Palestinian crisis with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader, Mr Yasser Arafat, when he made a brief stop-over in Bombay en route to Malaysia. India and the PLO had identical views on both the problems, she said.

The line of control dividing Kashmir between India and Pakistan was slightly changed during the 1971 Bangladesh liberation war but the Simla agreement for peace signed later between the Pakistani leader, Mr Z. A. Bhutto, and Indian Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, stipulated that both sides respect it.

The Simla accord was hailed by many countries, including the Arabs, and when Mr Khan called on the Egyptian President, Mr Hosni Mubarak, in Cairo earlier, he was told that Egypt wanted the Kashmir dispute to be resolved bilaterally in the spirit of this agreement.

Mr Khan clarified that India was not seeking any mediation but wanted the Arab and other countries to impress upon Pakistan the need for peace in the Indian sub-continent and to resolve any differences through discussions.

He said Pakistan should also help create an appropriate atmosphere for meaningful talks.

Mr Khan also got a positive response from the Algerian leaders in this regard.

Last month, Mr M. Dubey, secretary in the external affairs ministry, had visited Kuwait to inform the deputy prime minister and the foreign minister, Mr Shaikh Sabah, of India's views on the Kashmir issue and was told that Kuwait did not support religion-based separatism or fanaticism.

Indian ministers are expected to pay similar visits shortly to other Arab capitals for the same.

## Shift in Bangla policy on J & K

The Times of India News Service DHAKA, March 11.

THE Bangladesh president, Mr Hussain Muhammad Ershad's concern over the oppression on the Muslims in Kashmir and his call for stopping such measures there is immediately being closely scrutinised in political circles here.

The President expressed his view on the current situation in Kashmir on Thursday, a day after his talks with the Pakistan foreign minister, Mr Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, who left here the same day at the end of a three-day visit.

The mass-circulated Bengali daily, *Sangbad* ran a story yesterday, quoting diplomatic sources as having said Mr Ershad's view on Kashmir was an indication of the shift of Bangladesh's stand on the issue.

The Pakistan foreign minister reportedly requested the Bangladesh government to take the initiative for convening a special session of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to discuss the Kashmir issue, the paper said. It pointed out that until recently Bangladesh had been maintaining more or less a neutral stand on the problems.

During his visit to Bangladesh last month, the Indian foreign minister, Mr I. K. Gujral, had also requested the government to prevail on the member countries of OIC to maintain good relations with India in the wake of recent Kashmir developments, the paper said. The Bangladesh government, however,

made no commitment on India's request.

Meanwhile, Mr Khan, in an exclusive interview to *Holiday*, an English weekly news magazine published from here, said the position of Pakistan on the Kashmir issue was opposed to that of India. "We view that the absorption or integration of Jammu and Kashmir with the Indian union is illegal and not recognised by international law," he said.

The Pakistan minister said Kashmiris had the right to exercise self-determination which had been denied to them. This right had to be exercised under the United Nations resolution passed in 1948 and 1949 and which was binding on both India and Pakistan, he said, adding that as Kashmir was recognised as a disputed area in the Simla agreement, it must be resolved according to the UN resolution.

He said the attempt to divert attention from the problem by accusing Pakistan of intervention was untenable. "We condemn the violence and repression carried out by the Indian forces in Kashmir. This has led to the loss of hundreds of lives and brought affliction to the opposed people of Kashmir," he said.

In reply to a question, he said the spirit of regional co-operation could not remain immune from the influences that impaired bilateral confidence and relations.

In a separate interview to *The Bangladesh Observer*, a leading English daily, Mr Khan said a militarily strong, independent and prosperous Bangladesh was a great source of inspiration to Pakistan.

## AIDS strikes Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, March 11 (PTI): The Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) has now struck Pakistan and alarm bells have started ringing over the horrifying effects of the unchecked spread of the killer virus through contaminated blood transfusions.

While official figures say so far only 46 human immuno deficiency (HIV) virus cases have been detected in the country and 13 of them are AIDS patients, doctors estimate there are more than 170 private and government-run blood banks in Pakistan. Of the one million pints of blood transfused annually, about 65 per cent is collected through professional donors.

Almost 75 per cent of the laboratories involved in blood transfusion have no facilities to screen the blood for HIV-seropositive, says a leading English monthly.

A source of worry for the government has been reports of HIV-seropositive contaminated samples coming from people who had neither been abroad nor claimed to have any sexual contact with foreigners.

Of the 230 samples collected from different Karachi laboratories recently, four were found to carry the AIDS virus.

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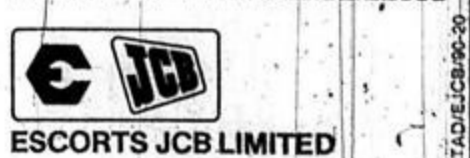
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